

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 AID-20 OMB-01 HEW-08 CU-04 SIL-01 LAB-06

DRC-01 /130 W

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R 041155Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5650

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

CINCPAC

COMUSSAG

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

C O N F I D E N T I A L PHNOM PENH 4951

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, CB

SUBJECT: THE GOVERNMENT'S AND ITS OPPONENTS' PLANS ON THE EVE OF THE  
NATIONAL TEACHERS CONGRESS

REF: PHNOM PENH 4369

1. SUMMARY. THE GKR APPEARS REASONABLY WELL PREPARED FOR THE NATIONAL TEACHERS CONGRESS, WHICH OPENS APRIL 5. ALTHOUGH THE CONGRESS WILL PROBABLY BE STACKED IN FAVOR OF THE RADICALS, CHANCES ARE THAT IT WILL STOP SHORT OF CALLING FOR A RESUMPTION OF THE TEACHERS STRIKE AND A DIRECT CONFRONTATION WITH THE GOVERNMENT. END SUMMARY.

2. MINISTER OF EDUCATION KEO SANGKIM INFORMS US THAT THE GKR HAS PREPARED WHAT IT BELIEVES TO BE A REASONABLE ECONOMIC PACKAGE TO PRESENT TO THE TEACHERS WHEN THEY MEET IN NATIONAL CONGRESS TOMORROW APRIL 5.

A) PARLIAMENT HAS ALREADY APPROVED THE GOVERNMENT'S REQUEST  
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THAT SECONDARY TEACHERS' OVERTIME PAY BE INCREASED BY

FIFTY PERCENT AND THAT THE PRIMARY TEACHERS' CLASSIFICATION STRUCTURE BE SIMPLIFIED IN A MANNER WHICH WILL GIVE RASIES TO ABOUT HALF OF THEM.

B) THE 3,000 RIEL MONTHLY INCREASE IN THE PEDAGOGICAL ALLOWANCE HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE APPROPRIATE EXECUTIVE AGENCIES, CANNOT BE PRESENTED TO PARLIAMENT BEFORE IT ADJOURNS FOR THE NEW YEAR HOLIDAYS, BUT SHOULD GET LEGISLATIVE APPROVAL IN PROXIMITY TO MAY 1, WHEN IT IS TO BECOME EFFECTIVE.

C) THE GOVERNMENT HAS AGREED TO ESTABLISH A NATIONAL EDUCATION TAX ON PROPERTY, BUT KEO SANGKIM EXPRESSED SOME RELUCTANCE TO PRESENT THIS POINT TO THE CONGRESS. (WE ARE ENCOURAGING THE GKR TO DO SO.)

D) THE GKR WILL RENEW ITS PROPOSAL TO USE THE 100 MILLION RIEL DEVELOPMENT CREDIT FOR TRANSPORTATION OF BASIC COMMODITIES TO A TEACHERS' COOPERATIVE IN PHNOM PENH (REFTEL).

3. KEO SANGKIM NOTED THAT RADICAL TEACHER LEADERS HAVE ALSO BEEN PREPARING FOR THE CONGRESS. HE HAD SEEN THE TEXTS OF TWO DRAFT RESOLUTIONS WHICH WOULD REJECT THE GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSAL FOR A DEVELOPMENT LOAN, PROTEST AGAINST RISING PRICES, AND RECOMMEND CONTINUATION OF THE TEN-DAY WORK MONTH FOR ALL TEACHERS. KEO SANGKIM EXPRESSED SOME CONCERN THAT ACTIVIST RADICALS MIGHT BE ABLE TO GAIN A MAJORITY OF THE VOTING SEATS IN THE CONGRESS (WHILE ALL OF THE NATIONAL TEACHERS ASSOCIATION MAY ATTEND, VOTES ARE RESTRICTED TO A SMALL NUMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND PROVINCIAL ORGANIZATIONS). HE NOTED THAT, ALTHOUGH THE GOVERNMENT BELIEVED THE PARENTS ASSOCIATIONS AND THE STUDENTS TO BE ON ITS SIDE (WE WOULD NOT ENTIRELY AGREE IN REGARD TO THE STUDENTS), IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO USE THIS SUPPORT TO AFFECT THE OUTCOME OF THE TEACHERS CONGRESS.

4. KEO SANGKIM'S CONCERN OVER THE VOTING MEMBERSHIP OF THE CONGRESS APPEARS TO BE JUSTIFIED BUT THE OUTCOME MAY NOT BE AS BAD AS HE FEARS. WE LEARNED TODAY THAT THE NATIONAL

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TEACHERS ASSOCIATION (AMCEK) LEADERSHIP HAS GRANTED THE TEACHERS STRIKE COMMITTEE'S 21 VOTES, WHICH IS WELL OVER ONE-THIRD OF THE TOTAL. FIRST HADN REPORTS WE HAVE HAD OF A STRATEGY SESSION TODAY BY THE STRIKING COMMITTEES, WHICH HAVE MERGED TO FORM A "JOINT COMMITTEE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY TEACHERS," INDICATED THAT THEIR DELEGATES AT THE CONGRESS WILL TAKE A LESS MILITANT STANCE THAN MIGHT BE EXPECTED. WHEN SPEAKERS AT THIS SESSION NOTED THAT PARENTS ARE BECOMING

MORE OPENLY HOSTILE TOWARDS THE TEACHERS, THE GROUPS DECIDED THAT, INSTEAD OF RECOMMENDING RESUMPTION OF THE TEN-DAY TEACHING MONTH, THEY WOULD DEMAND REDUCTION OF THE BASIC WEEKLY TEACHING HOURS BY ONE THIRD (WHICH COULD BRING THEM EITHER GREATER OVERTIME PAY OR A SHORTER WORK WEEK). THEY ALSO AGREED TO SUPPORT A RESOLUTION CONDEMNING ANY GOVERNMENT WHICH DOES NOT MEET THE TEACHERS DEMANDS.

5. COMMENT: THE GOVERNMENT'S PAY PACKAGE COMBINED WITH GROWING RESENTMENT OVER THE CLOSING OF SCHOOLS MAY HEAD OFF A NATIONAL TEACHERS CONGRESS STRIKE ORDER AND THE POTENTIALLY SERIOUS POLITICAL CONFRONTATION WHICH WOULD RESULT THEREFROM. ANY OUTCOME SHORT OF A VOTE TO RESUME THE STRIKE SHOULD PERMIT THE GOVERNMENT CONTINUED ROOM TO MANEUVER AND WOULD THUS, AT THIS POINT, BE ACCEPTABLE.  
DEAN

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## Message Attributes

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